

Church of Scientology International

January 21, 2013

Miguel Marquez, CNN
[redacted]

Dear Mr. Marquez:

I am providing this response for your planned program. Already Church counsel and Mr. Miscavige's counsel have sent letters refuting allegations about him personally. I must stress that the Church had numerous communications with CNN about these tired, unproven allegations and worked directly with CNN Atlanta, Mssrs. Griffiths, Davis and Vigilante. We have voluminous evidence that proves the allegations untrue and Mr. Wright ignored it all or refused to look. CNN, however, has seen it including a video that is available online that illustrates the allegations aired on CNN in March/April 2010 were provably false (http://www.freedommag.org/special-reports/cnn/video-a-beating-every-day.html—there is also an issue of *Freedom* Magazine that fully explains this called *Anderson Cooper, A History of Lies* at http://www.freedommag.org/special-reports/cnn.html). The apostate sources that Mr. Wright used are liars and cannot be trusted. These sources are some of the very ones CNN interviewed in 2010—and include Ms. Pressley.

I have enclosed answers to the false claims you inquired about. Others are posted on the Internet at www.lawrencewrightgoingclear.com in response to some of the more than 200 errors we have found so far in Mr. Wright's book.

I do not believe it is in CNN's best interest to rehash the allegations Mr. Wright irresponsibly publishes about the ecclesiastical leader of the Scientology religion. CNN already did a program in 2010 that was very inaccurate. There is plenty of other tabloid fodder in Mr. Wright's book that could be discussed and I believe it would

make for a more responsible broadcast as Mr. Cooper has been well briefed on how the allegations Mr. Wright so irresponsibly republished are insupportable.

The Church repeatedly offered its full cooperation to Mr. Wright to answer any questions so as to provide all information he needed to understand the Scientology religion, the Church and its Founder. The Church repeated this request more than *fifteen* times and many of the letters went entirely unanswered while others resulted in only about a dozen "fact-checks" consisting of obscure or mundane subjects out of context, such as:

- Did Mr. Miscavige (the ecclesiastical leader of the Scientology religion) ever experience difficulty sleeping while he was living in England? (When he was 12 years old.)
- Four questions devoted to Mr. Hubbard's cigarettes in the '50s and '60s (Mr. Hubbard stopped smoking in later years.)
- Or, "Has the church ever addressed the subject of Aum Shinryko?" (No.)

When Mr. Wright's bias was pointed out to him, he falsely accused the Church of bizarre actions based on not a single fact and went silent when asked to support his accusations.

Mr. Wright showed the Church he had no interest in the facts, only the lies and exaggerations being fed to him by angry, bitter sources with agendas based on hatred and revenge. The result is a biased work, more fiction than fact.

The lack of acceptance of the Church's willingness to provide information was and is insulting. In the end, Mr. Wright continued to seek out a small group of bitter apostates, many of whom are self-confessed liars, removed for malfeasance and immoral conduct whose ever-morphing stories have been questioned for the past several years—Mr. Cooper interviewed some of them previously and knows these sources are bitter and while I cannot say how CNN will conduct its show, I strongly urge that you not rely on their false statements again, as Mr. Cooper did in 2010.

British and Canadian publishers have elected not to print Mr. Wright's book. While Mr. Wright will say it is because of their libel laws, the truth remains that if the book was accurate there would be nothing to worry about.

I have enclosed the Church's statement and remind you that the website listed above can also be used by CNN and you are authorized to quote it and mention its address or show it on screen.

I include below what I believe are very pertinent questions that Mr. Wright should be asked by your on-camera interviewer. While I don't pretend to know an anchor's job, I believe answers to the following questions from Mr. Wright would be of interest to your viewers:

- Why was the book canceled in England and Canada?
- Numerous controversial books are published in both countries and the plug isn't pulled by publishers because of the libel laws. How do you explain that yours was?
- Why do you give short shrift to the growth and accomplishments of the Church that would have given your book a more well-rounded picture?
- Church officials say there are numerous facts wrong, which they have now listed in voluminous detail on their website. It includes such basic things as the year Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes were married. How do you respond?
- As you know, the Church and its celebrity members have long been a favorite target of the tabloid press which prints a lot of really wild stories about them. In your heart of hearts, do you really believe all of the stories you read about them or do you think it's possible a lot of them could be made up?
- How do you account for some of these tales about the Church morphing over time with each retelling?
- Virtually all of your anti-Scientology sources began talking to the media nearly four years ago and have talked to dozens of media organizations. Aren't many of these stories several years old by now?
- Do you concede that some of these people may just be bitter and angry at being dismissed from their positions and are inventing and spreading some of these stories out of revenge?
- How can you trust sources who have admitted both in print and in broadcast interviews that they are liars and suborners of perjury—and in one case a Florida judge as recently as December 2012 responded in court documents that statements made by one of these apostates were not true.

- You claim that the expanding 34,500 square-foot Church of Scientology of Seattle, Washington is closed, but it's not. How do you explain it? (The Church can be seen at www.scientology-seattle.org)
- Do you believe in the religious beliefs of others?

Regards,

Karin Pouw

cc: Richard Griffiths
Richard Davis
David Vigilante

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY INTERNATIONAL

ANSWERS TO CNN'S QUESTIONS

Paul Haggis claims in his researching of the church he found evidence of children made to work long hours. How does the church respond to that claim?

Paul Haggis has had no first-hand knowledge about the Church of Scientology for more than 30 years, and the only information he has is hearsay and false. It is common knowledge in Hollywood that Mr. Haggis is one of the most arrogant and self-important persons that people have ever met. Now, he is making up a story about what he found on his "investigation" and claiming he is embarrassed. Embarrassed for what? He never came in and looked. His investigation consisted of trolling on the Internet for rumors about the Church and talking to a handful of anti-Scientologists.

As to the specific allegation concerning children, the allegations are entirely false and denied. The Church of Scientology religious order follows all laws with respect to any young persons and have never subjected children to "long hours" or any such nonsense. Further, the religious order no longer accepts young children and instituted new policies in 1986.

In the book it is claimed that a file was maintained on John Travolta and that he was threatened with being outed as gay by the church. Additionally, on page 169 of the book David Miscavige is quoted as saying "The guy is a Faggot. We're going to out him" when referring to John Travolta. How does the church respond to claims that Travolta was threatened with being outed?

The story about Mr. Travolta is insulting and entirely untrue. This allegation is now 22 years old, has appeared in supermarket tabloids and has long since been disproven. There is no such information. The larger point to be made is that any and all communications between a minister and his parishioner is privileged and confidential as it is in other religions. It is considered sacrosanct by the Church and its ministers. We never break this privilege as even the courts know.

Do not broadcast that Mr. Miscavige ever made such a statement—he didn't and it is inconceivable to anyone who knows Mr. Miscavige, who is a compassionate leader of a worldwide religion. Lawrence Wright's source—Bill Franks—was expelled from the Scientology religion in 1982 (30 years ago) for malfeasance and attempted mutiny. He is

entirely unreliable and the subject was never fact-checked with the Church—typical of an irresponsible journalist.

The Church does not discriminate amongst our members with respect to sexual orientation and do not take any public positions regarding political issues.

CNN spoke to a former Scientologist, and Sea Org member, who claims they witnessed verbal and physical abuse by Mr. Miscavige. Mr. Wright's book also claims several incidents of abuse by Mr. Miscavige. The former Scientologist CNN spoke to also alleges they were declared a suppressive person and sent to the Gold Base in Hemet CA for punishment. Specifically, that they were forced to wear all black in searing heat, perform hard labor outdoors and take part in a "rehabilitation program" to "confront their treasonous actions against Scientology." How does the church respond to the many claims of abuse attributed to Mr. Miscavige? Does such a rehabilitation program at the church's Gold Base exist? Are church members punished in any way at this other facilities?

I understand the source of these claims is Karen Pressley who is an anti-Scientologist who left Scientology in 1998. Since then, Ms. Pressley promotes herself as a professional media pundit who propagandizes against members of new religious movements. While professing to be an evangelical Christian she actively endorses the anti-religious activities and theories espoused by remnants of the old disbanded Cult Awareness Network—the same theories put forwarded in Lawrence Wright's book.

Ms. Pressley's allegations are refuted by two declarations attached:

1. Ms. Pressley first raised this allegation on the Internet fringe and the supposed "victim," Ray Mithoff, says this never occurred and gives more information showing Ms. Pressley lied.

2. Ms. Pressley's former husband also contradicts her claim and gives more information about how unreliable Ms. Pressley is as a CNN source.

As to the claim about the Rehabilitation Project Force (RPF), it is a religious program available only to members of the Church's religious order, the Sea Organization. Ms. Pressley volunteered to do the program and I attach her written consent to do the program. The program is based upon one of the oldest and most fundamental concepts in religion—a religious retreat in the form of a cloister focusing on intensive spiritual introspection and study, balanced by some form of physical labor. This practice is

common to the religious orders of many other world religions in addition to Scientology, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and the monastic orders of the Roman Catholic Church.

Bottom line is she is not credible and CNN would irresponsibly be broadcasting her lies.

In general, the stories of alleged physical abuse are lies concocted by a small group of self-corroborating professed liars. The hard evidence clearly shows that no such conduct ever occurred and that in fact there is evidence that shows it did NOT occur and the religious leader was not in the state or country—a fact that would have been broadcast by CNN had the Church known what the allegation was before it aired. Church counsel has otherwise sent CNN notice specifically with respect to this allegation.

Finally Mr Wright and his publishing company Random House claims they have been threatened with legal action over the publishing of this book. Has the church filed or begun the process of suing Mr Wright and/or Random House? If so on what grounds and what damages is the church seeking?

The letters sent by the Church's legal counsel to Random House were an effort to alert them pre-publication to the travesty that Lawrence Wright was making out of the fact checking process for his book through his refusal to accept any meaningful input from the Church.

Instead of providing the Church with questions in context so that we could present him with the facts, he avoided the Church so he could publish the false and sensational claims of his apostate sources and forward his own atheist agenda. The result, unfortunately, is a book so factually flawed that publishers in two countries so far have declined to print it. As for the United States, the Church is still considering its options as we wade through the hundreds of lies contained therein.

CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT

CONCERNING LAWRENCE WRIGHT'S BOOK

Mr. Wright's book is so ludicrous it belongs in a supermarket tabloid. The book is an error-filled, unsubstantiated, bigoted anti-Scientology book. The Church has produced a white paper identifying the more than 200 errors so far discovered in Mr. Wright's book. See, www.lawrencewrightgoingclear.com. Specific examples include:

British and Canadian publishers chose not to print Mr. Wright's book, which speaks volumes about their confidence in its facts and allegations. Mr. Wright ignored the real story of Scientology in favor of stale allegations and ever-changing bizarre tales invented by a handful of confessed liars.

If objectivity and truth are the hallmark of an ethical journalist, then the only words to describe Lawrence Wright are corrupt and bigoted. A self-described atheist, Mr. Wright apparently feels that Scientologists have no rights to express their religious beliefs. In a letter of October 14, 2011, a full 15 months before publication, the Church offered full cooperation to answer any questions so as to provide all information Mr. Wright would need to accurately represent the religion, the Church, its leadership and Founder. The Church repeated this request *fifteen* times, as many of the letters went entirely unanswered while others resulted in only about a dozen fact-checks consisting of obscure or mundane subjects out of context. As a result, Mr. Wright produced a travesty of falsehoods.

Millions of Scientologists around the world embrace the religion. Since Lawrence Wright began his research, thirty new Churches of Scientology, known as Ideal Organizations, opened across the world—twelve in 2012 alone—and our humanitarian programs are bringing help to thousands of people from all walks of life on a daily basis.

To find out the true story of Scientology and its Founder, one can visit www.scientology.org, www.lronhubbard.org, or one can read Mr. Hubbard's books, which are available worldwide.

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